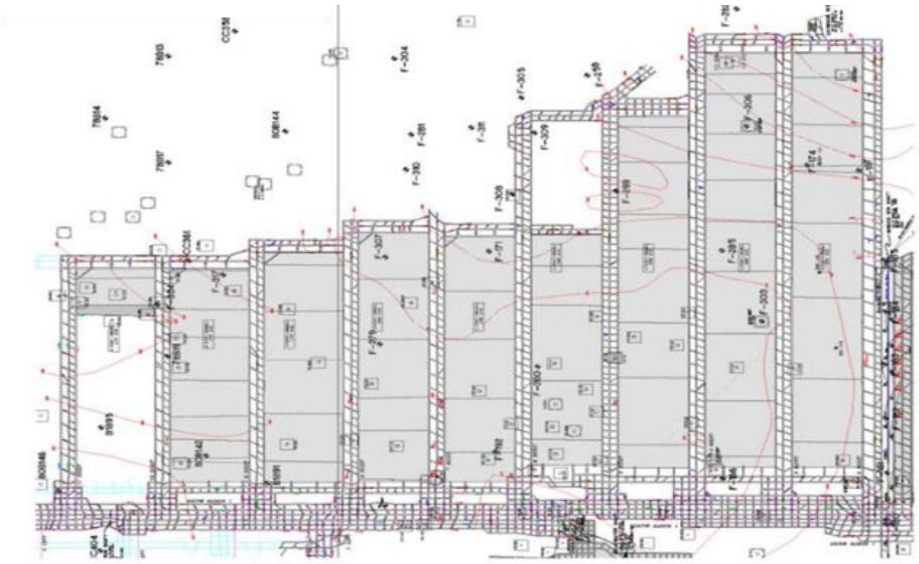
U.S. Department of Labor
Mine Safety and Health Administration
Protecting Miners' Safety and Health Since 1978

SAFETY ALERT
Bleeder Maintenance and Evaluation

The proper functioning of a bleeder system is dependent upon bleeder entries remaining open and necessary controls being maintained. Obstructions such as water and roof falls can severely restrict ventilation and prevent required examinations necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of a bleeder system. Inadequate ventilation has contributed to mine explosions.



BEST PRACTICES

- **Know requirements of the ventilation plan concerning the bleeder system being examined.**
- **Test for methane and oxygen concentrations, measure air quantities and assure air is moving in the proper direction.**
- **Assure ventilation controls are properly installed, located and being maintained for their intended purpose.**
- **Use properly calibrated and approved gas detectors to constantly monitor gases while traveling in bleeder entries.**
- **Report changing conditions such as deteriorating roof conditions, bottom heaving, accumulations or water so appropriate measures can be taken prior to the occurrence of hazards or violations**
- **Maintain bleeder entries reasonably free of water (less than boot height) so the depth does not pose a hazard to the examiner or restrict ventilation. Bridges, boats or other floating objects should not be used in lieu of removing water and waders should not be used to conduct examinations.**
- **Design bleeders using adequate methods for handling current or future water inflows.**
- **Establish safe passage through deteriorated areas, including areas where roof falls have occurred.**
- **Follow the Emergency Response Plan for communication and tracking procedures when conducting examinations of bleeder systems.**
- **Establish caches of SCSR's for persons examining and working in bleeders.**
- **Consider practical means for maintaining the required incombustible content of the combined coal, rock, and other dust in the safely accessible portions of the bleeder system.**